

Penyampai : DATIN SERI DR. SITI HASMAH BINTI HAJI MOHD. ALI
Tajuk : 35TH. REUNION ANNIVERSARY, KING EDWARD COLLEGE VII OF MEDICINE,
(SEBAGAI PENERUSI JAWATANKUASA PENGELOLA)
Lokasi : FERINGHI BALLROOM, RASA SAYANG HOTEL, PULAU PINANG
Tarikh : 12-12-1982

Tuan Yang Terutama Dr. Awang Hassan, Yang di Pertua Negeri Pulau Pinang, dan Toh Puan;

Yang Amat Berhormat Dr. Lim Chong Eu, Ketua Menteri Pulau Pinang, dan Puan Lim;

Tetamu-tetamu Yang Kehormat, dan Rakan-rakan Kelas tahun 1947.

Bagi pihak Jawatankuasa Perayaan Ulang Tahun ke 35 Kelas 1947 dan juga bagi pihak diri saya sendiri, saya mengucapkan selamat datang dan setinggi terima kasih kepada para hadirin sekalian, khasnya kepada Tuan Yang Terutama Tun Dr. Awang Hassan dan Toh Puan, yang sudi menerima jemputan kami pada malam ini. Saya juga mengalu-alukan kehadiran Yang Amat Berhormat Dr. Lim Chong Eu dan isteri, serta sekalian para jemputan dari jauh dan dekat yang bersama-sama datang menyerikan majlis kami pada malam ini.

Ladies and Gentlemen and Friends,

2. On behalf of the Organising Committee and those of us in Malaysia, nothing has given me greater pleasure than to have the opportunity of welcoming you to our 35th Anniversary and 3rd Reunion of the Class of 1947, King Edward VII College of Medicine.

3. This occasion has been made all the more memorable by the honour done to us by the presence of His Excellency the Governor of Pulau Pinang and his lady here tonight. We know Tun Dr. Awang not only as His Excellency the Governor, but also as our genial teacher and mentor in the wards of Kandang Kerbau Hospital in the early fifties and, to some of us, even before that. To him and to Toh Puan we extend a most fond and hearty welcome. Thank you for gracing this occasion.

4. I would also like to welcome another distinguished member of the medical fraternity, Yang Amat Berhormat Dr. Lim Chong Eu, the Chief Minister of Pulau Pinang and to thank him and Mrs. Lim for being with us tonight.

5. I am sorely tempted to wax sentimental tonight and for once I think even Yang Amat Berhormat Perdana Menteri will not frown upon me if I shall indulge myself so - unashamedly and without apology. For surely this night of all nights, is an occasion for sentiment - for fond memories - for nostalgia from that day in 1947 when we entered Medical School determined to conquer the world, cure its ills and serve humanity. Come to think of it, we perhaps felt rather high and mighty pleased with ourselves for having gained admission into what was at that time the most coveted openings available to school leavers in this part of the world. You would no doubt agree with me that the decisions on admissions that year were wise ones.

6. We can be really proud of the fact that as many as 45 of us, out of 75 members of the batch, are here tonight. I am extremely happy, on behalf of those of us in Malaysia, to welcome to Pulau Langkawi and Pulau Pinang those of you from Singapore and even as far away as Australia to this get-together.

7. Sri Delima, one of our leading newspaper columnists, after observing us at a University of Malaya Graduates Reunion a year ago in Kuala Lumpur, has this to say about us: "Of all the batches which have gone through that University, this one seems to be the most united. Looking at the batch of 1947, less colourful and cohesive batches feel more than a pang of envy. What is their secret?"

8. I do not know and I have no ready answer to Sri Delima's questions, but this I do know that the distinguishing characteristic of our batch has been the strong and enduring ties of friendship that have always existed amongst ourselves. Ties that were forged in the early days of College at lectures, in laboratories and wards, during ragging and in sports, tempered and polished in the crucible of Gausho's truck, Harrower Hall, Tan Tock Seng Hostel and Holne Chase. Ties that have bound us together in affection and understanding and mutual respect over these long years, and this despite the fact that not all of us achieved our aims and ambitions in 1947.

9. Some were gently persuaded that their talents would be better utilised elsewhere and in retrospect, how right their decisions were!! So today from our batch we are not only doctors and dental surgeons, professors, surgeons, physicians and obstetricians and respected general practitioners, but also lawyers, civil servants, social welfare experts, customs chiefs and company chairmen and even politicians, and lest you have forgotten, a surprisingly large number of them.

10. I can think of at least 8 who have actively participated in politics and 3 times as many armchair politicians. The 8 have had mixed fortunes -- one even got deported, 4 tried unsuccessfully to enter Parliament, both in Malaysia and Singapore, but 3 were successful, a rather large percentage, for a batch as small as ours in the first 25 years of independence. Not bad, I dare say, even though we must face the fact that one or two of them became Government Ministers, and one or two, like Sau Kan and myself, even worse became jobless housewives.

11. Surely then we can be forgiven, if on looking back nostalgically at our careers and lives since 1947, all of us feel rather pleased with ourselves tonight. It is surely attribute to the strength of the ties that bind us together, that 45 of us are able to find great joy, happiness and pleasure in just being together. We have had two very happy days in Pulau Langkawi and I am especially happy that so many of you were able to bring the next generation along with you.

12. I am sure you will not begrudge my making special mention of those who have come all the way from Australia to be with us: Bazooks, Rashid, Swan Tong and Chee Tong. We are touched by their determination to be with us this time.

Perhaps the next time we meet, more from overseas would attend and perhaps bring their grandchildren with them, even if the children find themselves too busy to indulge their parents during their few days of fun.

13. In all this happiness, let us spare a thought for our classmates departed. 8 of us have crossed the great divide, 3 since our last Reunion - 'Gumbo' Oorloff in Australia, Sir Rob in Malaysia and Noor Alam in England. We remember them with affection and we will always treasure memories of their friendship and camaraderie.

14. Finally, I would like to thank all members of the Organising Co. which were divided into the South, Central and North teams, for their untiring and excellent efforts to make this Reunion a successful and memorable occasion.

Their remarkable coordination made my duties as Chairman so pleasantly easy. There are many friends and supporters behind the scenes who helped in the transport, food and accomodation. To them I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude.

15. I am asked by the Committee to say that this Reunion, like the 1st and 2nd ones, would not have materialised if not for the unflagging enthusiasm and spirit of our dear friend J. J. A big thank you to him.

Ladies and Gentlemen and Dear Friends,

16. Our 35th Reunion this year coincides with the "Year of the Aging" which will end on the 31st December, 1982. We have not planned for the next one but for so long as we feel that we should meet again next year, or the next, or in 1987, we shall do so with great enthusiasm and spirit of the Class of 1947, despite falling hair, failing eyesight, failing heart and reduced what-have-you! Until then, let us enjoy this evening and relax with the music of 1947.

Ladies and Gentlemen, May I invite you to join me in a toast to "our absent friends and to the King Edward VII, College of Medicine".

Thank you.